

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Appellant:	Barracclough	Examiner:	Van Handel, Michael
Serial No.:	09/740,263	Group Art Unit:	2623
Filed:	December 18, 2000	Docket No.:	8X8S.223PA
Title:	Network Interface Unit Control System And Method Therefor		

REPLY BRIEF

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P.O. Box 1450
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Customer No. 40581

Dear Sir:

This Reply Brief is submitted pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 41.41(a)(1) for the above-referenced patent application. On August 9, 2007, the Examiner provided an Examiner's Answer to Appellant's Amended Appeal Brief submitted on May 1, 2007, in support of the Notice of Appeal filed on December 19, 2006, and in response to the final rejections of claims 1-75 as set forth in the final Office Action dated July 11, 2006.

No fee should be required for the timely filing of this Reply Brief. However, if deemed necessary, authorization is given to charge/credit Deposit Account number 50-0996 (8X8S.223PA) for all required fees/overages.

Status of Claims

Claims 1-75 stand rejected and are presented for appeal; the pending claims under appeal are listed in the attached Claims Appendix, with appropriate claim status identifiers.

Grounds of Rejection As Presented In Appeal Brief

1. Claims 1-6, 8-16, 21, 23-28, 30, 32-36, 42-49, 51, 53-59, 63-66, 68, 70 and 74 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Hamlin (U.S. Patent No. 5,574,964) in view of Ellis *et al.* (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2005/0251827).
2. Claims 20 and 50 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Hamlin in view of Ellis *et al.* and further in view of Goldstein (U.S. Patent No. 5,410,326).
3. Claims 7, 22, 29, 31, 37-41, 67 and 75 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Hamlin in view of Ellis *et al.* and in further view of Edens *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,611,537).
4. Claims 17-19, 52 and 60-62 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Hamlin in view of Ellis *et al.* and in further view of Cohen *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 4,837,798).
5. Claims 69 and 71-73 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Hamlin in view of Ellis *et al.* and in further view of Lewis (U.S. Patent No. 5,835,126).

Appellant's Reply Argument

All Section 103 rejections must be reversed because the proposed combination of the Ellis reference with the Hamlin reference, upon which all claim rejections rely, does not teach or suggest all of the claimed limitations and is not motivated. Each of the issues, as presented under the respective headings and claim groupings of the Appeal Brief, can be resolved upon a determination that the proposed combination of the Ellis reference with the Hamlin reference is improper -- if this combination is lacking in terms of either correspondence to the claimed invention or the requisite motivation for making the combination.¹

Accordingly, in the more detailed discussion below, Appellant fully incorporates the arguments made in the Appeal Brief filed on February 20, 2007 here with the bulk of these arguments omitted for brevity. The following discussion is focused to the Response to Arguments in the Examiner's Answer, and in particular, upon the disparity and inappropriate combination of these two primary references as discussed above.

The Section 103 rejections of all claims must be reversed; the cited references do not teach or suggest the claimed limitations, and the proposed modification of the primary Hamlin reference with the Ellis reference is unmotivated and contrary to the purpose of the Hamlin reference.

The Hamlin reference does not teach or suggest the claimed limitations as suggested and cannot be modified with the Ellis reference to function in accordance with either the claimed invention or in a manner consistent with the purpose of the Hamlin reference. There are several issues with the rejection as presented in the Appeal Brief, with different issues discussed under separate headings below.

In short, the Hamlin reference has nothing to do with the claimed invention's approaches to the storage and delivery of media; Hamlin simply describes the communications of various types of data over a common medium and fails to recognize, much less address, the problems as addressed in the instant invention. There is no motivation to modify the Hamlin reference with common data storage techniques (as cited in the secondary Ellis reference) because Hamlin is concerned only with the active delivery of communications, and there is no discussion

¹ In the Appeal Brief, these issues of correspondence and motivation are respectively presented under headings "1.A." and "1.B." The issues presented under Appeal Brief headings 2-5 concern rejections based on the same improper combination of the Ellis reference with the Hamlin reference.

whatsoever of combining a server with distribution as claimed in the instant invention. The only suggestion to arrive at the claimed system lies in the specification of the instant invention itself, and the Examiner's apparent reliance upon this suggestion has been held to be an improper use of hindsight-based analysis. The Examiner's Answer continues to overlook the clear disparity between the instant invention and the cited references and continues to fail to establish any correspondence to the claimed limitations. Appellant notes that each Ground of rejection relies upon this improper combination, with the first Ground of rejection addressing all of the independent claims; in this regard, the impropriety of the rejections under the first Ground of rejection is applicable to each of the other Grounds of rejection. Resolution of this first ground of rejection in the Appellant's favor should serve to show that all claim rejections are improper.

Lack of Correspondence: the Examiner's attempt to interpret Hamlin's one-way delivery of visual data over an external telephone line via a modem as "bi-directional telephony communications" to internal devices as claimed is improper.

The Examiner's alleged interpretation of bi-directional telephony communications appears to be new, yet was not listed under a new ground of rejection. Notwithstanding this, Hamlin's telephone line communications in as cited by the Examiner involve the use of an external telephone line 37 to communicate between a converter 34 at a residence to an external system for retrieving data (see FIG. 1). Such an approach may involve, for example, connection to an external banking system (*see, e.g.*, column 6:66-7:2). This external telephone modem-based retrieval of data is unrelated to the claimed internal routing of data to bi-directional telephony devices on an internal bussing arrangement. Moreover, bi-directional telephony devices as relevant in the art relate to communications in two directions (hence, "bi"-directional), as is common with telephone communications involving users at two (bi-directional) telephones that communicate with each other. The claimed limitations directed to bi-directional telephony communication devices thus relate to the same. In contrast, the portions of the Hamlin reference cited by the Examiner are directed to the one-way delivery of visual data to internal devices, with the discussed telephony communications being external to the cited signal distribution system and separate from any delivery to Hamlin's receiving units (*see, e.g.*, FIG. 1 and the above discussion). The Examiner's alleged "interpretation" of Hamlin's one-way delivery as bi-directional in accordance with the claims is therefore confusing and improper. In this regard,

Hamlin does not teach or suggest claimed limitations directed to telephony-based appliances that provide bi-directional telephony communications.

Lack of Correspondence: the Ellis reference does not disclose the storage and routing of external services data as asserted.

The Examiner's Answer appears to cite new portions of the Ellis reference as corresponding to the claimed limitations directed to the storage and delivery of external-services data, in citing pages 1, 2, 3, and 6 of the Ellis reference, yet again has not listed this discussion under a new ground of rejection. Notwithstanding this, these new portions also fail to describe the storage and communications of external-services data as claimed. The Hamlin reference is directed to an interactive television program guide system, as is consistent with its title, abstract and all portions of the reference cited by the Examiner, and fails to describe the storage and routing of external services data for use at bi-directional telephony appliances. As described in the Appeal Brief, the cited Server 80 in the Ellis reference does not describe the storage and delivery of external-services data. The Examiner's (new) reference to paragraph 0062 of the Ellis reference is also misplaced in that this paragraph refers to Ellis' purpose to provide an interactive guide system, with any storage of data being for "storing local information" that is used to route television signals. This television distribution facility is external to any user's system and corresponds, for example, to "a cable system headend, a broadcast distribution facility, or a satellite television distribution facility" (*see, e.g.*, paragraph 0060). Discussion of a server in the Ellis reference simply involves the active routing of incoming data and provision of a television guide; storage of external services data is separate as characterized, for example, using videocassette recorders in the immediate paragraph following the Examiner's referenced server 80 (paragraph 0075). In this regard, the Ellis reference does not teach or suggest the storage of external services data as suggested.

Lack of motivation: the Examiner fails to cite any evidence from the prior art and is contrary to the purpose of the Hamlin reference.

In addition to the above lack of correspondence to (or teaching or suggestion of) the claimed limitations, the Examiner has, to date, failed to provide any evidence from the prior art as motivation for modifying the Hamlin reference to include the storage of external services data

and delivery of that data by a user-programmed network interface unit. The Examiner's attempt to address Appellant's arguments at page 39 of the Examiner's Answer instead relies upon an unsupported assertion regarding the reduction of equipment in the Hamlin reference, which is contrary to Hamlin's purpose. Specifically, the Examiner references Hamlin's background discussion regarding the undesirability of equipment updates needed to meet different communications standards, as alleged motivation for modifying Hamlin to include the storage of external-services data. The Examiner goes on to say that one of skill in the art would be motivated to replace the multiple pieces of equipment in the Hamlin reference with the claimed invention. Not only is there no evidence supporting the Examiner's position, this alleged motivation is untenable in that Hamlin's purpose is directed specifically to use in an environment involving multiple pieces of equipment, and the modification of data for communication to these pieces over a common bus system (*see, e.g.*, Hamlin's Summary at column 1:66 – 2:7). This alleged motivation is thus not only unsupported by any evidence from the prior art (relying instead on Appellant's specification), it is also contrary to the purpose of the Hamlin reference. In this regard, there is no motivation to modify the Hamlin reference to arrive at the claimed limitations.

Lack of motivation: the Examiner's proposed modification of the Hamlin reference would render it unsatisfactory for its purpose.

Modifying Hamlin to store external-services data and to communicate to appliances using a common communications format (*e.g.*, telephony-based appliances) would render its invention unsatisfactory for its intended purpose. Hamlin's purpose is directed to the active conversion and immediate distribution of "distinct input signals into a separate converted frequency signal which becomes a component of a common bus signal" (*see* column 2, lines 10-14). Hamlin's purpose is also directed to the use of a common communications bus for communicating with disparate devices (*i.e.*, as the Examiner suggests, to avoid upgrading equipment). Modifying the Hamlin reference as suggested to store data and further communicate to bi-directional telephony devices would obviate its need to distribute active information (as it is received) over a common bus arrangement amenable to use with devices communicating under different formats (*see id.*). In this regard, there is no motivation to modify Hamlin as suggested.

In view of the above, all of the claim rejections are improper because each relies upon the combination of the Ellis reference with the primary Hamlin reference, which fails to teach or suggest all of the claimed limitations, and because the Examiner has failed to cite evidence in support of the proposed combination of references. The above arguments therefore apply to other grounds of rejection of all of the claims.

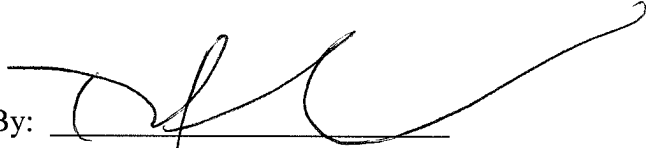
VIII. Conclusion

In view of the above, Appellant submits that the rejections of claims 1-75 are improper. Appellant therefore requests reversal of the rejections as applied to the appealed claims and allowance of the entire application.

Authority to charge the undersigned's deposit account was provided on the first page of this reply brief.

CRAWFORD MAUNU PLLC
1270 Northland Drive – Suite 390
St. Paul, MN 55120
(651) 686-6633

Respectfully submitted,

By: 
Name: Robert J. Crawford
Reg. No. 32,122

CLAIMS APPENDIX
(S/N 09/740,263)

1. (Previously Presented) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility that provides its users telephony-related services, the arrangement comprising:

an audio, video, and data signal bussing arrangement adapted to distribute audio, video, and data to designated points in the user facility;

a plurality of telephony-based appliances communicatively coupled to the bussing arrangement, wherein the plurality of appliances provide bi-directional telephony services using at least one of: audio, video, and data signals;

at least one data memory circuit adapted to store external-services data and adapted to store configuration data;

a programmable network interface unit (NIU) adapted to store external-services data in the memory circuit and to communicatively couple the stored external services data from the memory circuit to the plurality of appliances in the user facility via the bussing arrangement as a function of the configuration data in the memory circuit; and

a user input device adapted to access the data stored in the memory circuit, to program the programmable NIU by providing the configuration data and to command the NIU via the bussing arrangement to process the external-services data for use at a particular one of the plurality of appliances in the user facility.

2. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein the user input device includes one of the plurality of appliances.

3. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of appliances includes at least one of: a TV, a phone, a computer, a printer, a videophone, a videocassette recorder, an analog recorder, a digital recorder, a stereo, a camera, a wireless phone, an intercom, an audio speaker, and a pager.

4. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein the user input device includes at least one of: a TV, a phone, a computer, a videophone, a videocassette recorder, a wireless phone, an audio speaker, a pager, a

remote control, a modem, a voice recognition system, an Internet access device, a keypad, and a touch screen.

5. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein the bussing arrangement includes at least one of: a coaxial cable, a telephony line, a T1 line, an ISDN line, a DSL line, an infrared transmitter, a wireless transmitter, a telephone modem, a wireless modem, a cable modem, a broadband modem, and a computer network.

6. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein the user input device includes a television remote adapted to select NIU commands from a display generated by the NIU and displayed on the television.

7. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein the user input device includes a telephone adapted to select NIU commands from a command menu programmed into the NIU.

8. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein the NIU is further adapted to configure the external services data for use at a particular one of the plurality of appliances.

9. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 8, wherein the external services data includes audio and video data, and wherein the NIU is adapted to configure the audio data for use at an audio appliance and to configure the video data for use at a video appliance.

10. (Previously Presented) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein the NIU includes the data memory circuit.

11. (Previously Presented) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein the NIU is adapted to store incoming external

services data at the data memory circuit until a routing command is received from the user input device, and to route the external services data directly from the data memory circuit in response to the received routing command.

12. (Previously Presented) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 11, wherein the user input device is adapted to communicate with the NIU and determine the type of external-services data that is stored.

13. (Previously Presented) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 12, wherein the user input device is adapted to determine the source of the external-services data.

14. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 10, wherein the NIU is adapted to store configuration information in the data memory circuit, wherein the configuration information includes routing information for external services data.

15. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein the external-services data includes data having a first data form, and wherein the NIU is adapted to convert the external services data into a second data form for use by a particular one of the plurality of appliances.

16. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 15, wherein the first data form includes packet-based data, and wherein the second data form includes non-packet-based data.

17. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 15, wherein the first data form includes word processing data, and wherein the second data form includes audio data.

18. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 17, wherein the first data form includes an email message, and wherein the NIU is adapted to read and convert the email into an audio message.

19. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 15, wherein the first data form includes audio data, and wherein the second data form includes word processing data.

20. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein the user input device is further adapted to include a security code, and wherein the NIU is further adapted to respond only to commands having the security code.

21. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of appliances include a TV, and wherein NIU is adapted to display the configuration of the plurality of appliances on the TV screen.

22. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 21, and wherein the configuration data includes telephone data including at least one of: the telephone number assigned to the phone, call waiting options, caller ID options, answering options, forwarding options, message storage options, call blocking options, and call screening options.

23. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 21, wherein the user input device is adapted to command the NIU based upon the configuration display on the TV screen.

24. (Previously Presented) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein one of the plurality of appliances includes a display, and wherein the NIU is adapted to display the stored incoming external services data on the display.

25. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 24, wherein the user input device is adapted to command the NIU based upon the displayed incoming external services data.

26. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 25, wherein the NIU is adapted to display email, audio messages, and video messages, and wherein the user input device is adapted to respond to an input corresponding to the displayed information and to command the NIU to route the displayed information to a particular one of the plurality of appliances.

27. (Previously Presented) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, further comprising a digital memory circuit coupled to the NIU, wherein the external-services data is digital data and is stored in the digital memory circuit.

28. (Previously Presented) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein the external-services data is stored at a location external from the NIU.

29. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein the NIU includes a processor adapted to function as an answering machine for incoming telephony calls.

30. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein the user input device is coupled to the bussing arrangement and uses the bussing arrangement to command the NIU.

31. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 30, wherein the NIU is adapted to receive configuration information in the form of DTMF tones, wherein the bussing arrangement includes a two-wire analog system, and wherein the user input device is adapted to send control signals to the NIU including DTMF tones.

32. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein the user input device is adapted to send control signals to the NIU that are configured to enable the control of external-data services including at least one of: caller ID information, address book information, pay-per-view access information, downloadable multimedia information, dynamically allocable telephone numbers, call forwarding, message on hold, directory assistance, and household systems control information.
33. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein the NIU includes a printed circuit board (PCB) having at least one general processor and at least one specific processor adapted to process video data.
34. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 33, wherein the PCB includes a RISC processor.
35. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 33, wherein the PCB includes a DSP processor.
36. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of appliances is adapted to deliver status information signals to the NIU including the status of the appliance sending the signal, further comprising a user interface device adapted to access and provide the status information to a user.
37. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of appliances includes a microphone adapted for use in an intercom system.
38. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 37, further comprising a monitoring device coupled and adapted to receive audio signals from the microphone and, responsive to detecting an audio signal above a threshold level, send an alert signal to a user via the NIU.

39. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 38, wherein the microphone is located near an infant, and the system is used to monitor the infant.
40. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 39, wherein the alert includes a page signal.
41. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 38, wherein the microphone is adapted to monitor noise for security monitoring.
42. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 1, further comprising an appliance interface device coupled to an appliance and to the bussing arrangement and adapted to receive a first type of signal and convert the data signal to a second type of data signal.
43. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 42, wherein the appliance interface device is further adapted to receive a signal via a first type of communications line and to transmit the signal via a second type of communications line.
44. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 42, wherein the appliance interface device is programmable via a user input.
45. (Original) An arrangement for processing external-services data for use in a user facility, according to claim 42, wherein the appliance interface device is programmable by an external-services provider via the NIU.
46. (Previously Presented) A network interface system for interfacing different types of communication systems including a first user-based telephone communication system and a packet-based communication system, comprising:

a data memory circuit adapted to store configuration data and packet-based data from the packet-based communication system;

a telephony-based user communication device;

a processor arrangement adapted to write configuration data into and read configuration data from the memory circuit and to provide data for presenting configuration information for accessing at the telephony-based user communication device, further adapted to process data received from, and exchange processed data between, the first user-based telephone communication system and the packet-based communication system, and, in response to the configuration data, also adapted to route selected information provided by the packet-based communication system and to route data stored at the data memory circuit to selected channels of the first user-based telephone communication system;

user input means for inputting configuration-defining control signals, wherein the processor arrangement responds to the configuration-defining control signals by changing the configuration data in the memory circuit and by rerouting selected information provided by the packet-based communication system to selected channels of the first user-based telephone communication system according to the configuration-defining control signals.

47. (Original) A network interface system, according to claim 46, further comprising a network system coupled to the first user-based communications system.

48. (Original) A network interface system, according to claim 46, wherein the user input means includes at least one of: an IR key panel, a wall-mount unit for the system, a TV, a telephone, a computer, a videophone, a videocassette recorder, a wireless phone, a remote control, a modem, a voice recognition system, an Internet access device, a keypad, and a touch screen.

49. (Original) A network interface system, according to claim 46, wherein the processor arrangement is further adapted to write configuration data into the memory circuit in response to signals received from the packet-based communication system

50. (Original) A network interface system, according to claim 46, wherein the processor arrangement is further adapted to permit reconfiguration in response to a user-provided security code.

51. (Original) A network interface system, according to claim 46, wherein the user communication device includes at least one of: a TV monitor, a printer, and computer.

52. (Original) A network interface system, according to claim 46, wherein the user communication device includes a voice generating unit adapted to produce prerecorded messages.

53. (Original) A network interface system, according to claim 46, wherein the user input means includes a computer adapted to communicate on the Internet.

54. (Original) A network interface system, according to claim 46, wherein the packet-based communication system includes at least one of: a cable modem, a wireless modem, a broadband modem, a telephone modem, a DSL, a T1 line, and a computer network.

55. (Previously Presented) A network interface system for interfacing different types of communication systems including a first user-based telephone communication system and a packet-based communication system, comprising:

- a data memory circuit adapted to store data including packet-based data received via the packet-based communication system;

- a telephony-based user communication device;

- a processor arrangement adapted to write data-intercept select data into and read data-intercept select data from the memory circuit and to provide data for communicating with a user via the telephony-based communication device, further adapted to process data received from, and exchange processed data between, the first user-based telephone communication system and the packet-based communication system, and, in response to the data in the data memory circuit, also adapted to intercept information from the packet-based communication system and to store the intercepted information in the data memory circuit;

user means for inputting message-retrieval control signals, wherein the processor arrangement responds to the message-retrieval control signals by displaying messages from the data memory circuit.

56. (Original) A network interface system, according to claim 55, wherein the user input means is at least one of: an IR key panel, a wall-mount unit for the system, a TV, a telephone, a computer, a videophone, a videocassette recorder, a wireless phone, a remote control, a modem, a voice recognition system, an Internet access device, a keypad, and a touch screen.

57. (Original) A network interface system, according to claim 55, wherein the processor arrangement is further adapted to write data-intercept select data into the memory circuit in response to signals received from the packet-based communication system

58. (Original) A network interface system, according to claim 55, wherein the processor arrangement is further adapted to write data-intercept select data into the memory circuit in response to signals received from the input means.

59. (Original) A network interface system, according to claim 55, wherein the user communication device includes a TV monitor.

60. (Original) A network interface system, according to claim 55, wherein the user communication device includes a voice generating unit adapted to produce prerecorded messages.

61. (Original) A network interface system, according to claim 60, wherein the voice generating unit audibly produces the prerecorded messages over the user communication device.

62. (Original) A network interface system, according to claim 61, wherein the user communication device is communicating a first audio signal, and wherein the prerecorded messages are audibly produced at a sound level over that of the first audio signal.

63. (Original) A network interface system, according to claim 55, wherein the user communication device includes a computer adapted to communicate on the Internet.

64. (Original) A network interface system, according to claim 55, wherein the packet-based communication system includes at least one of: a cable modem, a wireless modem, a broadband modem, a telephone modem, a DSL, a T1 line, and a computer network.

65. (Previously Presented) A method for controlling communications data in a communications system having a NIU, a user interface device, a plurality of telephony-based communications appliances, and a bussing arrangement the method comprising:

- programming the NIU from the user interface device via the bussing arrangement with configuration information for external-services data;

- receiving external-services data at the NIU;

- storing the received external-services data in a memory circuit;

- responsive to the configuration information, configuring the stored external-services data and transferring the configured data via the bussing arrangement to one of the telephony-based communications appliances; and

- receiving the transferred external-services data at the one telephony-based communications appliance.

66. (Original) The method of claim 65, wherein programming the data receiving unit with configuration information includes programming routing information for routing the external-services data to particular ones of a plurality of communications devices.

67. (Original) The method of claim 66, wherein the particular ones of a plurality of communications devices include a telephony device, and wherein the routing data includes the assignment of a particular telephone number to the telephony device.

68. (Original) The method of claim 66, wherein the particular ones of a plurality of communications devices include an Internet device, and wherein the routing data includes the assignment of a particular Internet protocol address to the Internet device.

69. (Original) The method of claim 66, wherein the particular ones of a plurality of communications devices include a TV, and wherein the routing data includes the assignment of a particular television subscription package to the TV.

70. (Original) The method of claim 65, wherein using the user interface device and programming the NIU with configuration information for external-services data includes programming from an external-services provider location, wherein the configuration information controls the type of external services that the NIU passes to the plurality of communications devices.

71. (Original) The method of claim 70, wherein the external-services data includes television data, and wherein the external-services provider location programs the NIU with a television subscription package.

72. (Original) The method of claim 71, wherein the television subscription package includes a specified number of television sets that can use the television data.

73. (Original) The method of claim 71, wherein the television subscription package includes a pay-per-view event.

74. (Original) The method of claim 70, wherein the external-services data includes packet-based data, and wherein the external-services provider location programs the NIU with a packet-based access package.

75. (Original) The method of claim 70, wherein the external-services data includes telephony-based data, and wherein the external-services provider location programs the NIU with a telephony-based access package.

APPENDIX OF EVIDENCE

Appellant is unaware of any evidence submitted in this application pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.130, 1.131, and 1.132.

APPENDIX OF RELATED PROCEEDINGS

As stated in Section II above, Appellant is unaware of any related appeals, interferences or judicial proceedings.